



Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Policy for Unsupervised Volunteering of Vulnerable Populations

The DNR is focused on managing risks for the State, the public and our volunteers. In order to provide a safe environment for everyone, the DNR adopts these requirements for its volunteers who are, without compensation, providing unsupervised services to the DNR leading or managing vulnerable populations. For purposes of this policy, vulnerable populations are described as youth under the age of 18, elderly persons and persons with disabilities.

In addition, the following groups of volunteers shall submit to the requirements mentioned in this document:

- Unsupervised DNR volunteers who have ready access to sleeping quarters on DNR property.
- Unsupervised DNR volunteers who have access to firearms or weapons.
- Campground hosts.

Requirements

Unsupervised volunteers who work with vulnerable populations shall be required to comply with the following requirements:

- A. Must be 18 years of age or older.
- B. Must be capable of managing the vulnerable population in terms of safety. This may require the volunteer to possess certain physical and mental capabilities to be able maintain the safety of the vulnerable population.
- C. Must not subject the persons under their supervision to inappropriate or abusive treatment. Such activity would be outside the scope of the volunteer's service, particularly but not solely for the purposes of tort liability protection pursuant to Iowa Code Section 669.24.
- D. Must provide DNR with the proper paperwork to conduct background checks for criminal history and presence on sex offender or child/dependent adult abuse registries.
- E. Volunteers are responsible for the costs of fingerprinting required for background checks.
- F. Background checks must be conducted at least once every five years while volunteering with DNR. DNR reserves the right to require additional background checks at any time.
- G. To pass a background check, the volunteer must not be restricted, as described below.

Restrictions

If the volunteer meets any one or more of the following criteria, either at the initiation of their volunteering or during the course of their volunteering, they will **NOT** be able to volunteer unsupervised with Vulnerable Populations:

1. Any conviction for or related to domestic violence, child abuse or neglect, dependent adult abuse or neglect, or contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

2. Within 10 years of volunteering; any conviction for or related to drugs or alcohol, operating a boat or vehicle while intoxicated, firearms violations, theft above simple misdemeanor, harassment, or making terroristic threats.
3. Is registered or is required to register as a sex offender in any jurisdiction of the United States or Canada.
4. Is registered or is required to register on the child abuse registry in any jurisdiction in the United States or Canada.
5. Has had hunting or fishing privileges suspended or revoked in any jurisdiction within the United States within the last 5 years.
6. Does not have requisite licensure or permit to engage in the volunteer activity.

The DNR reserves the right to consider any other convictions or criminal behavior, to determine whether an individual can safely supervise a vulnerable population as a DNR volunteer.

If you have any questions about this DNR policy, please contact the Iowa DNR Volunteer Coordinator by phone at 515-725-8261.